THE

LEWES NEWSMENS' ADDRESS

TO THEIR

CUSTOMERS,

For the YEAR 1796.

O'ER desert heaths, and sandy soil,
Your ever constant NEWSMEN toil,
To earn each scanty meal;
Behold like Mercury they fly,
Nor mark the changes of the sky,
Nor storms nor tempests feel.

If shelving snows their ways impede,
Yet onward still with haste they speed,
Their letter'd charge to give;
For what are snows, and what is rain,
To them who *must* subsistence gain,
And by their labour live?—

Or, when AURORA gilds the morn,
And early huntsmen wind the horn,
And larks attune their lays;
Or, when the Sun his zenith gains,
Or sinks to gild the western plains,
And CYNTHIA shoots her rays;

Alike through all the rolling year,
With gossip Fame their steps to cheer,
Through hamlet, town and vill,
Of all the changes that await
The giddy vessel of the State,
The faithful NEWSMEN tell.

As TIME to dire events gives birth,
And Revolutions fill the earth,
With bloodshed and with crimes;
'Tis their's (nor shall their record fail)
To circulate the faithful tale,
And mark the wayward times.

Of Knowledge, that the soul uplifts,
Behold they waft the sacred gifts,
And rally round her throne;
Do husbandmen improve the soil,
'Tis their's to note their honest toil,
And make the secret known.

If Price of Stocks much fluctuate
From Army moves, or moves of State,
Depression or increase,
They truly in their Journal bring;—
And *hope*, next New-Year's tide, to sing,
Of PLENTY, and of PEACE.

If storms at sea (with ills replete)
Expose to danger Britain's fleet,
And honest seamen die;
'Tis their's, whilst Death, with tyrant pow'r,
With victims fills th' eventful hour,
To raise the genial sigh.

Or, if (the Conq'rors of the main!)
Her fleets, with terror in their train,
With glory mark the year;
'Tis their's, tho' *Gallia's* power falls
Beneath *Britannia's* wooden walls,
T' excite the gen'rous tear:

(For who, though every heart must bound
At Victory's all cheerful sound,
To drop a tear can fail;
When Valour's sons in thousands die,
And shrieks of murder rend the sky,
And swell the teeming gale.)

Since thus your faithful NEWSMEN wait,
On all the stern decrees of fate,
And yet their lot so hard,
O let, 'midst Winter's dreary yell,
Your favours gild their humble cell,
And Heav'n shall you reward.

With hearts elate, and spirits warm,
Their annual duty they'll perform
Whatever seasons reign;
Nor on your bounty e'er intrude,
With humble bows, and verses rude,
'Till Christmas comes again.